

American Junior Red Cross NEWS



December 1948

m.werten.



HER FIRST DOLL—Little 5-year-old Helen, Polish orphan, who lives in a Displaced Persons camp in Germany, smiles with joy when she finds a Christmas doll in her American Junior Red Cross gift box.





American Junior Red Cross NEWS

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The Spirit of Christmas

DOES CHRISTMAS give you a warm and tingle-y feeling down deep inside? You can't explain why. You just know everything about Christmas makes you feel happy and good all over. And you love it.

Sometimes Christmas smells make you feel that way. Piney greens of wreaths and Christmas trees. Spicy baking smells from mother's kitchen. Or woodfires crackling.

And Christmas sounds. Christmas bells. Caroling. The big organ at church. Soft whispered secrets.

The candle burning in the window across the street reminds you of the legend about how a candle's light guided the Christ child. And looking up into the dark sky to find the Bethlehem star twinkling there, brings Christmas very close. You feel kind and loving. You want to do something special for someone else to show your love.

This feeling at Christmas is what grown-ups call the "spirit of Christmas." Best of all you can keep it in your heart always. "*The things of the spirit abide forever*." Presents you hold in your hands only a short while. But love in your heart lasts always.

Candle Light—Star Light—Golden Light

THE NEWS this month brings our Christmas greetings to you. All through its pages you will find stories and pictures which breathe that spirit of Christmas we've been talking about.

To every member of the American Junior Red Cross everywhere—*A Merry Christmas!*

—Lois S. Johnson, editor.



The Golden Cobwebs

(An old German folktale)

Illustrated by Ann Eschner Jaffe

THE CHRISTMAS TREE was all trimmed and ready. It stood safely out of sight in a locked room so the children would not see it before it was time. Just the same . . . many eyes had seen it, standing there all a-glitter. The great green eyes of the black cat had seen it. The blue eyes of the white kitten had seen it. The brown eyes of the brown dog had seen it. And the bright eyes of the canary had seen it.

But all around the house . . . in the warm corners of the attic, and the dark, cool corners of the cellar, and behind the basket of wood near the fireplace, and under the leaf of the plant on the windowsill, and in a crack in the floor behind the umbrella-stand in the hallway— were many, many eyes that had not seen the Christmas tree.

They were the eyes of the little gray spiders, and the little black spiders, and the medium-size brown spiders, and one large, orange-and-black spider—a friendly fellow who had gotten into the house by mistake one day last summer and liked it so well he decided to spend the winter.





For a long time now, the spiders had been looking forward
to seeing the Christmas tree.

But suddenly a great cleaning-up had started
all over the house.

The big, hard broom came flying into the corners.
The dustcloth flicked furiously everywhere.
The scrub-brush went in wet circles across the floor,
dripping water into all the cracks.
The house was being made clean and shining
for the birthday of the Christ child.
And the spiders had to run for their very lives!

The spiders huddled together behind a rafter
to talk the whole thing over.

Now spiders, as you know, like to see everything,
and know just exactly what is going on.

Most especially they wanted to see the beautiful Christmas tree.
Suddenly the little black spider had an idea:

"Let's ask the Christ child to help us," he said.

"Do you think . . . ?" said the little gray spider.

"Might it be . . . ?" said the medium-size brown spider.

"But of course He will," said the big orange-and-black spider
who knew more about the outside world
than the others did.

So the spiders went together to see the Christ child.

"Dear Christ child," they said, the little voices
and the big voices speaking all at once—

"You have seen our webs. You know we love beautiful things.
More than anything in the world we want to see
the Christmas tree.

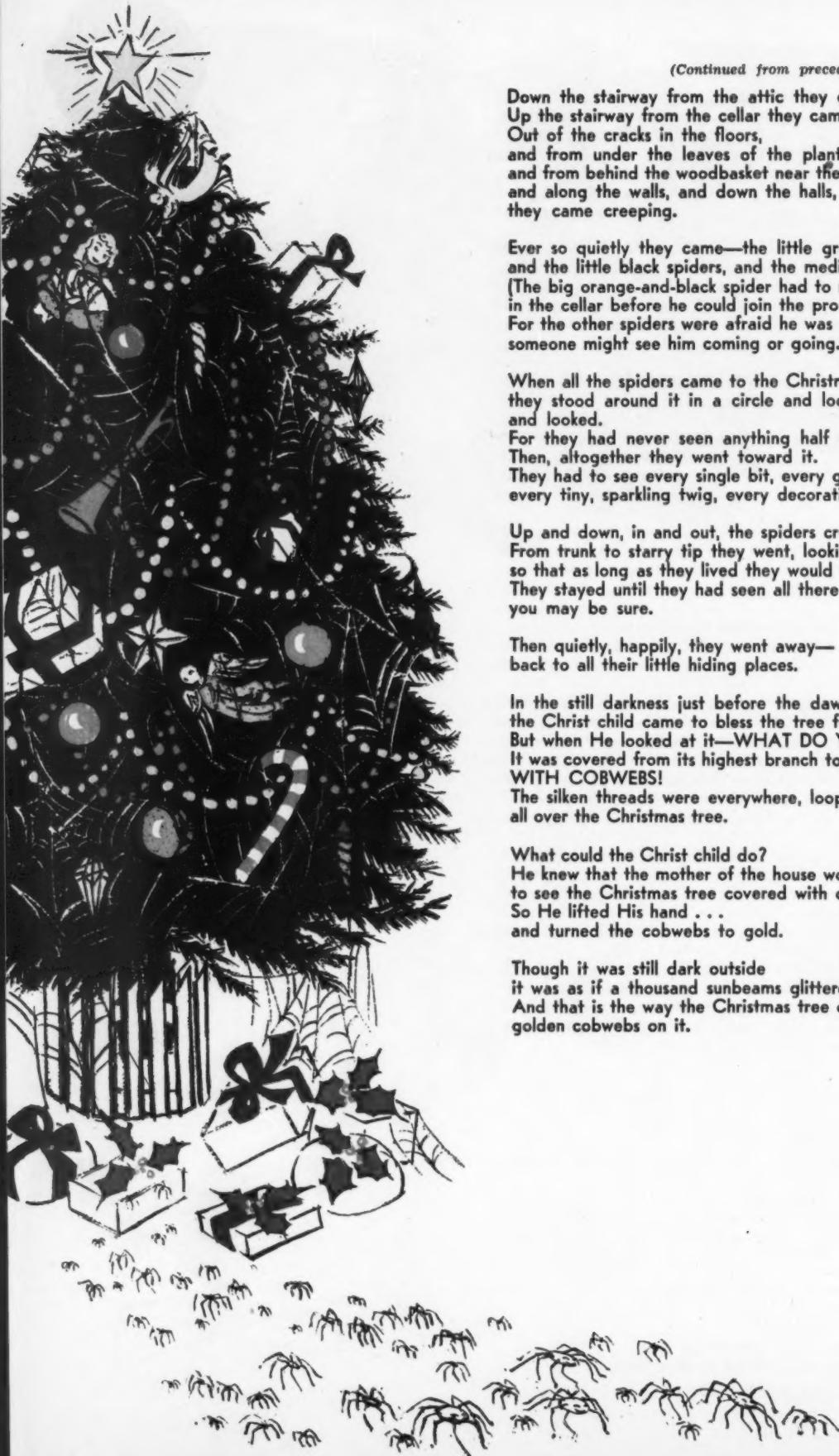
But we dare not go into the room.

The broom and the mop and the dustcloth would be after us
if we went anywhere near."

The Christ child felt sorry for the spiders.
So when the family was all away
on the day before Christmas,
He called to them and told them to go in
and look and look and look as long as they liked.

(Continued on the next page)





(Continued from preceding page)

Down the stairway from the attic they came creeping.
Up the stairway from the cellar they came creeping.
Out of the cracks in the floors,
and from under the leaves of the plants,
and from behind the woodbasket near the fireplace,
and along the walls, and down the halls,
they came creeping.

Ever so quietly they came—the little gray spiders,
and the little black spiders, and the medium-size brown spiders.
(The big orange-and-black spider had to roll around in some soot
in the cellar before he could join the procession.
For the other spiders were afraid he was so big and so bright
someone might see him coming or going.)

When all the spiders came to the Christmas tree,
they stood around it in a circle and looked and looked
and looked.
For they had never seen anything half so lovely.
Then, altogether they went toward it.
They had to see every single bit, every green branch,
every tiny, sparkling twig, every decoration.

Up and down, in and out, the spiders crept.
From trunk to starry tip they went, looking, looking,
so that as long as they lived they would never forget.
They stayed until they had seen all there was to see,
you may be sure.

Then quietly, happily, they went away—
back to all their little hiding places.

In the still darkness just before the dawn of Christmas day
the Christ child came to bless the tree for the children.
But when He looked at it—WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE?
It was covered from its highest branch to its lowest twig
WITH COBWEBS!

The silken threads were everywhere, looped in and out and
all over the Christmas tree.

What could the Christ child do?
He knew that the mother of the house would be very unhappy
to see the Christmas tree covered with cobwebs.
So He lifted His hand . . .
and turned the cobwebs to gold.

Though it was still dark outside
it was as if a thousand sunbeams glittered among the branches.
And that is the way the Christmas tree came to have
golden cobwebs on it.

From Heaven High I Come to You

OPAL WHEELER

This is the story of an old carol—which may be new to you! On the following page you will see the father as he plays his lute and sings to his son on Christmas eve. Then on page 9 you will find the carol itself.

ON THE DAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS, there was no busier household in all the German countryside than that of the Luthers. Besides the many preparations for the festival day, there were the children to be cared for, and by nightfall Mother Luther was weary, indeed.

"Come, dear wife, surely you have earned a good rest. Now I shall take the burdens on my own broad shoulders," said Martin Luther, kindly.

And turning to his merrily romping children, he added, with a twinkle in his eye, "And those who are speedily in bed shall have a song or a story."

The scrambling and scurrying brought chuckles to the lips of Martin Luther. Before many minutes had passed, the children were all safely in bed, snuggling under warm blankets against the cold winter night.

"A song! A story! It's time for the song!"

From its hook on the wall, the father took down his old lute, and seating himself beside the cradle, he rocked little Paul and sang Christmas songs in the light of the great open hearth.

At last there was not a sound, as one by one the children dropped off to sleep. All but little Paul, who watched his father with clear blue eyes, shining like star-bells from the low wooden cradle.

"And you, my little one of the seeing eyes, why do you not sleep? Are you waiting for the Christmas dawn to come creeping in at the window?"

There was no sound but the gentle rocking through the fire-lit room, and Luther thought of the Christ Child, cradled in a manger in Bethlehem so long ago. As he sat there dreaming, a song came into his mind, and lightly

strumming the melody, he sang the words as they came to him:

*From heaven high I come to you,
To bring you tidings good and true.*

Little Paul seemed to like the new song and smiling up at his father, he closed his blue eyes and fell fast asleep. As the verses went on, Martin Luther set them down with a strong, stirring melody. Now the children would have a new song for Christmas!

AND ON CHRISTMAS DAY, not only his own little ones gathered around him, but the neighbor children, as well. With glowing cheeks and snowflakes fresh on their fair hair, they bounded into the cheery Luther home, calling their merry greetings.

"Sing for us, Herr Luther! Sing for Christmas!"

"Ah, my merry little ones, and today you shall have a surprise. There is a new Christmas song that I wrote for Paul last night."

With shining eyes, the children listened to the lovely deep voice of Martin Luther as he sang the new carol, "From Heaven High I Come to You." Soon the sweet young voices were singing the song in clear ringing tones.

Martin Luther listened carefully, a smile of joy lighting his kindly face as he accompanied them on the lute.

"Ah, my children, what a wonderful gift is music! It comes to us from the very gates of heaven!"

As the merry songsters danced away through the Christmas storm, bits of the lovely hymn floated back into the Luther home:

*From heaven high I come to you,
To bring you tidings good and true.*



ILLUSTRATION BY
GUSTAF TENGGREN

*The father took down his old lute and, seating himself beside the cradle,
rocked little Paul and sang his new carol, "From Heaven High I Come to You."*

From Heaven High I Come to You

MARTIN LUTHER

1. From Heav - en high— I come to you, To bring you
2. This King is but a lit - tle child, His moth - er
3. Now let us all — with songs of cheer, Fol - low the

tid - ings- good_ and true. Good tid - ings of great
bless - ed _ Ma - ry mild. His cra - dle is _ but
shep - herds and draw near, To find this won - drous

joy I _ bring, To you this night is _ born_ a King.
now a _ stall, Yet He brings joy and _ peace to all.
gift of _ Heav'n, The bless - ed Christ whom God _ hath giv'n.

(The carol on this page and the story and picture on the preceding pages are used with the kind permission of E. P. Dutton & Co.; the author, Opal Wheeler; and the artist, Gustaf Tenggren from their book, "Sing for Christmas.")



Festival Lights

NINA SCHNEIDER

Illustrated by
Elizabeth Zimmerman



WHICH is *your* favorite holiday? If you asked that question among your friends and schoolmates, most of them would choose Christmas. If you asked why, they'd probably say "lots of presents" or "parties" or some such thing.

But there's another reason why Christmas is such a favorite holiday. It's a reason that people *feel* rather than think about. Christmas holidays are welcome because winter is dark and gloomy and a celebration is especially cheery at that time.

In the middle of the winter the nights are long. It's dark when people leave for work in the morning and it's dark when they return home. The hours of sunlight are short and people get glum staying indoors. It seems as if it will never be sunny and warm again.

But one day things begin to change. The nights begin to get shorter and the days begin to get longer.

That's just about the time Christmas comes. People feel like celebrating. They want to hurry the sun along and welcome it. And the best way of making things cheery is getting together and lighting fires for warmth and light and pleasure.

Many different people celebrate the coming of longer days with lights of some kind. Bonfires, candles, Christmas tree lights, Indian floating lights, Chinese firecrackers—in all parts of the world we burn lights to welcome the sunlight.

Of course there are different religious reasons for different people, too. While the Christmas trees are being lighted with candles or bulbs, a great many other celebrations are going on.

AMONG THESE CELEBRATIONS is the one which the Jewish people call their Festival of Lights, or Hanukah. Children love it because it has wonderful customs that go with it.

First, there are gifts. Gay packages with pretty trimmings are exchanged with friends and neighbors.

Then there is good food. There is the delicious whiff of cookies and cakes from every kitchen window.

Party clothes are fluffed and readied for many visits.

Children go from door to door, singing the gay Hanukah songs and collecting candies and pennies.

Tables are decorated in blue and white, gay as summer skies with fleecy white clouds. And on the tables are the good things to eat. Hanukah has its own special food—light crispy pancakes served with many different kinds of coverings. Cherry preserves and strawberry jam are always popular.

Or you can have syrup, honey, cream all fluffy-whipped and sweetened, chopped nuts with luscious orange marmalade, soft cream cheese, and any other goodies mother can prepare.

And there's plenty of time to enjoy everything. For eight days, the Hanukah festival continues. Families sing and dance folk dances. Children act out the Hanukah story. There are games every evening.

Some of these games are very old and have been played by children throughout the centuries. The principal toy used in these games is the Hanukah top made of wood or metal. It is almost identical in design with the tops used by children in ancient times.

And in every window there is a sign of Light

and Joy—the burning candles on the brightly polished candlestick called the Menorah. It's a special kind of candlestick with room for eight orange-colored candles in a row, and a ninth candle raised above the others.

As the father lights the candles, he tells of the miracle which gives Hanukah its special meaning to the Jewish people.

THE STORY BEGAN a long time ago, when a king of Syria conquered the land called Israel, the land of the Jews. In those days a country had to take on the religion of the ruler. The king ordered the Jews to put statues of his Greek gods in their temples and to pray to these strange gods.

But the Jews did not obey the conqueror. They refused to give up their own religion, and they would not obey the king's commands. The Syrian king used force. He sent his soldiers to terrify the people by killing men, women, and even children. The soldiers killed an old priest.

The people decided that they would never give in. They would fight back against oppression. Groups of people got together—just like other people since then who have fought to keep their freedom and their beliefs.

Guerilla bands were formed. They hid in the hills until they could organize and train themselves. Then they formed an army. It wasn't very large and it didn't have the latest equipment. But at the head were the Macabees, the sons of the old priest who had been killed. In the army were men whose families had been destroyed and men who were fighting to save their families.

And the little army of rebels beat the king's army. Each Jew fought like ten men and the Syrian army ran away defeated.

This was one of the first times that a nation fought for the right to worship in its own way. Many times since then, a small group of people has fought a powerful oppressor, preferring to lose and die rather than give up their beliefs.

Well, the Jews fought for their beliefs, and they won. Their great battle was fought on one of the long winter nights, toward the end of December.

You can imagine with what feelings the Jews watched the defeated Syrians straggling home. The happy victorious people ran to the temple to light the holy lamp and give thanks to God for His guidance and help.

But the temple was in a shameful state. Broken statues lay all about. The floors were filthy from the cattle that had been allowed to stay there. The holy lamp, which should always be burning, was out. Quickly, the men cleaned and scrubbed the temple. The priests came to bless the place again.

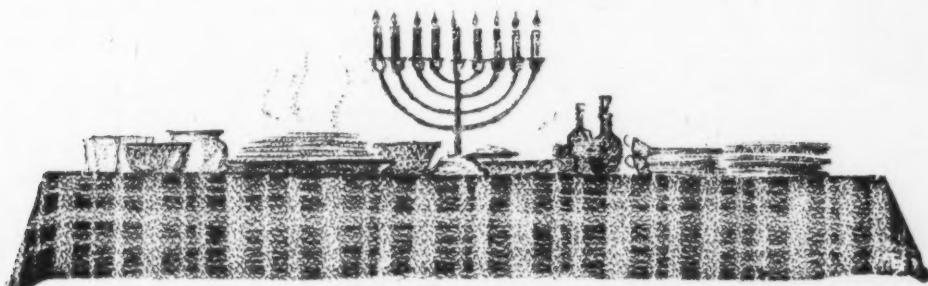
When they prepared to light the holy lamp, they could find only one bottle of pure, clean oil with which to fill the lamp. That was hardly enough to last even one night. But the men didn't want to wait for a large supply of pure, clean oil. Better to have light for a little while, they agreed, than darkness until the messengers returned with more oil from far off.

But when they had poured the little bottleful of oil into the great lamp and lit it, a wonderful thing happened. Instead of burning for just a little while, the light burned brighter and brighter, for eight days and eight nights, until the messengers returned from far away carrying the sacred oil.

TO CELEBRATE the victory and the miracle, candles are lit for eight days, beginning with one on the first day, two on the next, and so on until all the sunny orange candles are burning brightly. The ninth candle is the lamplighter, with which the other candles are lit.

Every year, on the anniversary of the victory, the Menorah is placed in the window, where the light shines out to say:

Throughout this land, people may worship freely, without fear, in the ways of their own beliefs.



from DENMARK and the PHILIPPINES

Christmas in Denmark

IN WINTER Denmark is covered with sparkling snow which adds to the beauty and gaiety of the Christmas season. Great preparations are made for the tree on Christmas Eve, after which the families usually attend a church service.

Gifts are made and collected by the Danish Junior Red Cross for the homes for little children and the institutions for old people. Even the birds are remembered and little piles of grain are set outdoors for their Christmas dinner.

And then those mischievous little fellows the *Nisse* must be provided for! Perhaps you have never met a *Nisse* in his peaked red cap, red coat, gray trousers, and wooden shoes, but if you should, remember he is very fond of rice. On Christmas Eve Danish families place a bowl of rice outside the door just in case a *Nisse* should pass by, for if he does and you have forgotten him he will be very cross and may cause you trouble.

The *Nisse* seem to be first cousins to our Gremlins and can play all kinds of tricks on you if so inclined, but if in a good humor can be your friend.

A goose or pork is roasted for the Danish Christmas dinner and there must always be rice cooked in milk. An almond is hidden in the dish of rice, and the lucky person who finds it receives a special gift.

Christmas in the Philippines

IN THE TROPICAL CLIMATE of the Philippines there is no snow at Christmas but it is a gay season nevertheless. The Vinter Elementary School at Ilocos Norte wrote all about it in a school correspondence album:

"In the Philippines there are some old Christmas customs which are to be found in no other country. The practice of observing Christmas was introduced by the first friars who came to the islands. A period of nine days before Christmas Day was celebrated by ceremonies and feasts.

"On each morning of the nine days preceding Christmas, the church bells ring at about

3 o'clock. A band goes around the town to awaken the people to go and attend mass. The second time the bell rings the mass begins. It is called *misa de Gallo*.

"The manner in which the *misa de Gallo* is celebrated follows a tradition told and retold. First in the high mass are sung the *Kyrie Eleison* and the *Agnus Dei*. Beats of drums follow each song. The band plays between regular parts of the mass.

"When mass is finished, the bells ring out again while the band plays vigorously. Then the young people gather in groups and go to the cake sellers. There they sit for a while and tell jokes and stories.

"In Manila, where the progress of the 20th century civilization is fast driving out many old traditions, the *misa de Gallo* is one of the few that has remained. In Santa Cruz, the early morning mass is preceded by a procession in which people carry colored lanterns and tapers.

"Throughout the Philippines, the most important part of Christmas celebration is Christmas Eve. Before the midnight mass, a procession is held where the marchers carry

Nine big chests full of handmade toys were sent by Philippine JRC members to say "Thank you" for school supplies sent them by the American Junior Red Cross. Below, wicker doll furniture, and at left a Philippine fish trap.



You will like these two stories of Christmas celebrations from the Danish and Philippine albums, as retold by Alice Ingersoll Thornton.

lighted tapers. The groups of boys and girls carry paper lanterns in high bamboo poles and march along reciting the rosary. There is at least one band in each procession.

"Children consider Christmas their own particular day. They pass from house to house singing carols, reciting poems, and playing on instruments. In return, the owner of the house gives gifts of cakes and toys which fill the children's hearts to overflowing."



PHOTOS BY ROYAL DANISH MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

▲ Lighted Christmas tree in the City Hall Plaza, Copenhagen.
Below, Danish children busy cutting and pasting decorations for the Christmas tree.



▼ From Philippine gift chests—



▼ Toys show how people live and work in the islands.



CHRIST begins in th



RICHMOND NEWS-LEADER
AH-ELLO, SANTAI Junior Red Cross mem-
bers, Richmond, Va., bring Santa to
visit shut-in children like Johnny.



CHEER FOR VETERANS—
Making decorations in
Oklahoma City, Okla.

PLAYTIME PHOTO
FOR A MERRY CHRISTMAS—Hemp-
stead, N. Y. Junior Red Cross members
fill stockings for veterans hospitals. □



STMAS the heart

crippled children
ED CROSS

TINGS
MEN OVERSEAS



↑THE TIME OF HIS LIFE—Little Tommy enjoys a special visit to Santa, made possible by Junior Red Cross members, Colorado Springs, Colo.

◀SANTA'S HELPERS in Buffalo, N. Y., make Christmas decorations for servicemen.



◀MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL—Two schools worked together to put on a party of music and gifts for children in a Baltimore, Md., hospital.



Christmas Came in Fur

ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

Illustrated by Ursula Koering

THREE HAD NEVER in the world been a pet anywhere like Joshua. He was called Joshua after Father's best friend, who was the Union general who held Little Round Top at Gettysburg against Longstreet and who had been governor of the state two times.

Father had wanted to name his newest baby boy Joshua, after his old friend. But Mother had said it was too homely and heavy a name for a handsome little boy. So Joshua was saved up and given to the baby squirrel when he came along.

Joshua had fallen out of his mother's nest in a tree somewhere in the college yard. But nobody knew which tree, so nobody could put the baby back in his home. That was how he came to join the Westcott family.

The squirrel joined William Westcott, that is. For it was the 8-year-old William who attached himself firmly to the baby from the instant he first laid eyes on him.

It was William who fed the baby milk, drop by drop, from Father's medicine dropper. It was William whom the squirrel ate with and slept with until he was full grown. It was inside William's sleeve that Joshua would creep when he felt playful, and William did not mind the tickles. It was William's pocket he would slide into, after he had run himself weary, and curl up to sleep in.

ONE RED-LETTER DAY in school, William felt something stirring in his coat pocket. He put in his hand and out popped Joshua. Big as life and starry-eyed from his nap, he jumped to William's shoulder and sat calmly down in the curl of his lovely wide tail. Joshua had overslept and gone right off to school, unbeknown to his master, in William's jacket.

It reminded the teacher and everyone else

of Mary and the lamb. But this time the teacher let the pet stay.

Joshua went up and sat on the corner of the windowsill and did not bother anybody. He behaved himself beautifully all the time William was at his lessons.

The children, though, were in ecstasy and got very little spelling done. Yet the teacher glowed with delight and forgave all the misspelled words. She even invited Joshua to come again.

But of course Joshua never did. It had put a strain on him, behaving himself so long. It was much too long a time for a friendly, lively squirrel, one that liked to climb up and down a small boy's body and hunt for peanuts in his many pockets, to stay sitting down and behaving among so many strangers.

Joshua made it his business each day to search every nook and corner of William for peanuts, beechnuts, acorns, hazelnuts, or whatever nuts were in season. The boy would hide the nuts all over himself, even in the lining of his coat. But Joshua would smell them out and find them all in no time.

Walnuts were Joshua's deepest love. The first time he ever found one he seized it, spun it around just once between his stubby thumbs, bit it exactly at the right spot in the tough seam, and laid it wide open in his paws.

ONCE, AND ONLY ONCE, William plagued Joshua over a walnut. He never did it again. William held the walnut fast between his teeth and showed it to his friend. Joshua leaped from the curtain rod, struck on William's head, ran down his nose, and seized the walnut in his teeth. But William bit harder and held on to it.

Joshua scolded and scolded. He was hop-

A BELOVED POET tells a tale with a very special Christmas radiance — about the handsomest present William Westcott ever had in all his life.

ping mad. He jumped up and down on William's curls. He chattered and fumed.

Then a hot little flame came into his eyes. He gave a quick and long jump, he landed smack on William's nose, and he set his sharp teeth into William's nose until they met.

The boy opened his surprised mouth and let out a howl of pain. He let out the walnut, too. Joshua caught it before it hit the floor, ran up the curtain, sat down hard and took the nut apart, scolding all the time. It was a lesson in manners William never forgot. He never teased his pet again.

Of course Joshua caused trouble. He was often mischievous. He couldn't help it, being a squirrel. He would get into Mother's sewing box and chew up some of her best tatting. He chewed a big hole right through William's second-best pair of knickers just where a hole could do the most damage. He was a terror with his sharp and busy teeth.

But Mother and everybody else forgave Joshua, for he was the most intelligent pet the Westcott family had ever had—more intelligent than crows, even.

Once and only once,
William plagued his
friend Joshua over
a walnut.



Joshua was quick to learn to give the hot cookstove a wide berth, to sit up high somewhere and stay quiet while the family were at dinner and not ask for his until they folded up their napkins.

IT WAS a sorry day when Joshua got his growth. For now, Mother said, the boys must take the squirrel outdoors and let him go back to his family. William's heart was like lead, but he went with his brothers out into the college pines. They found the place where Joshua struck when he fell out of his home. They let him go free.

Joshua would not go one step. He looked up at the high trees, and they did not look good to him; they were too high. He sniffed the pine needles, but he did not fancy them. He leaped right up on William and got into his pocket and curled up. He knew where home was, all right.

The little boy went home at a dance, joggling Joshua so that he chattered and scolded. But he stayed where he belonged, and William kept his hand on the big bulge of life in his coat pocket.

All summer long Joshua went out as much as he pleased in the woods. He had the run of the pines. He learned to climb them to their tops. But he always came back. The

minute he saw William go into the house at night, he went in, too. He knew when bedtime came, and he knew his bed was William's bed.

PERHAPS it was the acorns. Mother always thought so. Anyway, it was a great autumn for acorns that year; they covered the whole earth like cobblestones. Maybe Joshua went wild, seeing so much food to store up. Maybe he thought the house would never hold all the acorns he planned to hide away. At any rate, one golden October day, William's squirrel went out gathering nuts, as he had done for days, and he did not come back.

William stayed out long after the sun had gone down, calling and calling for his bedfellow. He stayed out till the frost fell on him and his mother made him come on in.

Oh well, Mother comforted him, Joshua had learned all about the woods and wild nuts now; he had learned how to take care of himself. William must not mind.

But the small boy did mind. He minded awfully. He did not get over missing his friend. All through October and November and December, a dozen times a day, William would put his hand into his pocket. But there never was any furry ball of love there to unroll and scamper up his coat and sit on his shoulder and work its tail up and down.

Even the coming on of Christmas time could not make small William forget his loss. He thought of how Joshua would have loved the plum pudding that was aging for the day. While the other boys were planning to make surprises of sleds and sling-guns for one another, he sat quiet and very sorrowful. It wasn't going to be a very happy Christmas for William Westcott.

The day before Christmas came on with a mighty snowstorm. The damp snow erased

the whole world. It plastered the windowpanes over till a boy could see out only through a little round spot in the center of the pane.

William was sitting sadly by the library window and thinking about the Snow Queen.

His brothers were trimming the tree and were beginning to light the little wax candles. It was all blue and dark outside. William did not turn toward the candles. He had never been so low in his mind. They could light up the whole tree for all of him. He wanted no part in Christmas.

AND THEN, right at his saddest, Christmas came, and it came all over. Never so fine a Christmas in the world! It came with a faint tapping on the windowpane right where William's nose was sorrowfully flattening itself against the glass. A tapping that William would never have heard if his face had not been pressed to the cold glass in sorrow.

William opened his eyes wide and peered hard into the snowy night. All at once he came alive. He let out a shout. His brothers came running. His mother came running. His father came running faster than them all.

It was Joshua! He was draggled to a rag, cold and roughened up by the gale. He had his fill of the woods for one winter. He was through. He had come home. All the family poured out to fetch him. But it was William who brought him in, his two hot hands trembling all over. They all felt like singing. William didn't have to sing any Christmas carols, though. He was nothing but one whole Christmas carol inside, from his Eton collar to his shiny new shoes!

Christmas came in fur that year. And it was the handsomest Christmas present William Westcott was ever to have in his life.

(Used with courteous permission of the National Parent Teacher Magazine and the author.)

Christmas came for William with a faint tapping on the windowpane.





Four of the boys who helped bring in the trees

PINE
and
CEDAR
they
brought

In verse and pictures Junior Red Cross members of Pulaski County Chapter, Little Rock, Arkansas, tell how they made a happy Christmas for the veterans in a nearby hospital.

'Twas the month before Christmas,
When all through the meeting,
Not a group had responded
For the trees vets were needing.
When all of a sudden
Junior Red Cross came through—
Offered trees for the wards
Cut by members so true.

By the side of the road,
Several boys waited
For the trucks to arrive,
And were they elated!
They had worked many hours
In the forests nearby
To fell eighty-six trees,
For Christmas was nigh.

Pine and cedar they brought
To the schools miles away,
To be put in the wards
For our vets Christmas Day.
One tree hung with tinsel
By juniors in "Rec" Hall
Glowed "Service To Others,"
To veterans and all.

With apologies to " 'Twas the Night Before Christmas."



This is one of 86 big Christmas trees which were cut and decorated by Junior Red Cross members for the hospital.

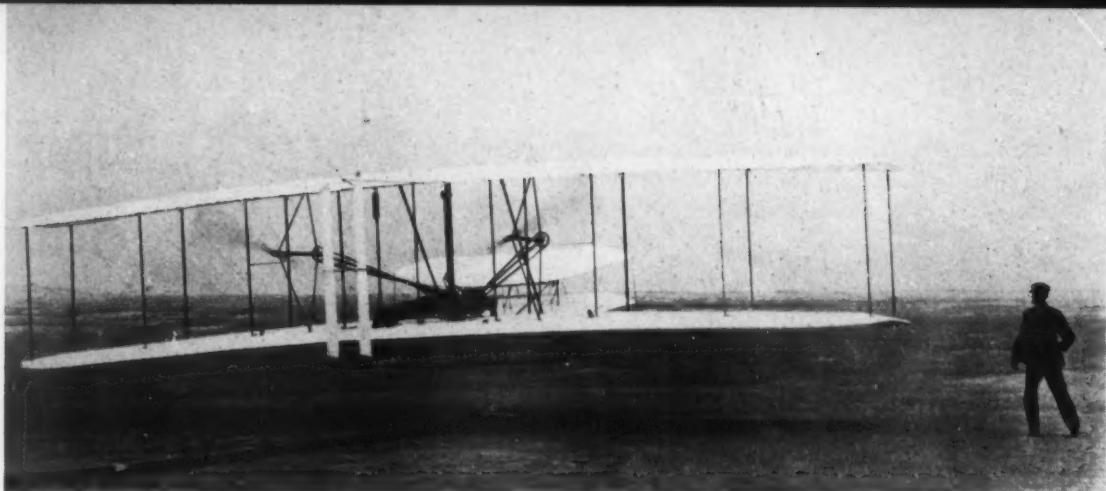


PHOTO FROM THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

How Two Boys Found Their Wings

THE BIG FRONT DOOR of a house in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, swung open. Two little boys, Orville and Wilbur Wright, looked up from their play. There stood their father smiling mysteriously. They could tell that he had a present for them by the way he held his hands behind his back.

They ran forward eagerly. "What is it, Father? What did you bring us?"

Mr. Wright tossed something toward them. "Here," he said. "Don't let it get away from you."

Get away from them? They couldn't even get their hands on it. The strange object leaped into the air. It struck the ceiling. It spun and whirred and bobbed all around the room.

The boys watched, wide-eyed. "What is it? What makes it go?"

At that moment, in the year 1878, an interest in what made things fly was born in the hearts of the Wright brothers. It stayed with them all their lives. It made history.

The boys nicknamed their new plaything "The Bat." In their eagerness to find out what made it go, they soon wore out the flimsy bamboo and paper toy. But they built another just like it. Breathlessly they launched it. Would it fly? It flew.

Wilbur and Orville began to dream, read, and live flying. They experimented with kites. They fluttered bits of twisted paper in streams of air from a blowpipe. They studied the stories about Otto Lilienthal, the young German flier who built gliders.

Otto Lilienthal, they discovered, had built a glider with birdlike wings of a light fabric,

and with a tail at the back. He strapped it to his body, under his arms. Then facing the wind, he ran down the side of a hill. The wind, sweeping up under his wings, lifted him off the ground.

The young German flier developed great skill in using his body to keep his balance. By turning and twisting, he found that he could offset the effects of the wind. This way he kept his wings on an even keel.

Learning from the Birds

The Wright Brothers studied these experiments. They thought about the fascinating Mr. Lilienthal a great deal. He actually was flying like a bird. The idea occurred to Wilbur and Orville that birds flew even better than Mr. Lilienthal. They decided to observe birds in a scientific way.

One day, while watching a young bird learn to fly, the boys made an important discovery. The bird was well equipped for what it was trying to do. But it had to learn *how to use that equipment*. Time after time it faced the wind, and took off. Time after time the wind overturned it after a few flaps.

"The person who merely watches the flight of a bird gains the impression that a bird has nothing to think about but the flapping of its wings," Wilbur wrote, several years later. "This is only a small part of its mental labor. The things the bird must keep in mind in order to fly . . . would take a big book."

Their First Glider

About 20 years later, after much study, Wilbur and Orville built their first glider.



The "Kitty Hawk," famous first flying machine, pictured on the facing page, is being brought home to the United States from London, where it has been on exhibit at the Science Museum in London for 20 years. When you come to Washington, D. C., you can see it at the Smithsonian Institution.

In this picture of the first flight, Orville Wright is at the controls, Wilbur is running beside the plane.

This story by GERTRUDE HARTMAN tells how Wilbur and Orville Wright first got the idea that some day man might fly—and how their idea grew.

Then they began to look around for the best place to try it out.

The United States Weather Bureau told them about a spot called Kitty Hawk, on the coast of North Carolina. There the wind blew smoothly and steadily all day long. It was a lonely place with high sand dunes, ideally suited for the launching of a glider. It also offered soft landing places in case the fliers should fall.

In 1900 the Wright brothers made a camp at Kitty Hawk.

One day in October they asked themselves as they had when they were children: "Will it fly?" One of the brothers climbed upon the glider, and lay down on a wing. His hands gripped the handles containing the two sets of wires that controlled the wings.

The other brother loosened the ropes that held the glider to the ground, and gave the machine a push.

Slowly the glider rose, soared—and fell into the sand. Again and again they repeated the process. Each time the machine stayed in the air a little longer. Wilbur and Orville became convinced that flight for man was a not-too-far-off possibility.

They left Kitty Hawk and went back to Dayton, Ohio, where they owned a bicycle shop. But their dreams were far above wheels that traveled on the ground. For 3 years they experimented with ideas for flying. There had to be something that would get the glider into motion under its own power. That meant propellers—two of them, moving in opposite directions.

And there had to be something that would keep it flying of its own accord. That meant a motor.

Soon the floor of the bicycle shop was cov-

ered with shavings as propellers were cut and shaped. The young men had to build their own motor, too. No suitable one could be bought.

Back to Kitty Hawk

In the winter of 1903 the brothers went back to Kitty Hawk. They picked out a big sand dune for their experiment, and waited until the wind was just right. The perfect weather combination came December 14.

Wilbur and Orville tossed a coin to see who should be the first to fly. Wilbur won.

He climbed into the plane, stretched out flat, and lay face down. With a great clatter and roar the motor started. The big, boxlike machine lifted itself into the air and shot forward. But in his great eagerness for a successful venture, Wilbur over-controlled the craft. The engine stalled. The plane settled heavily to the ground, turned over, and broke a wing.

In three days the wing was repaired, and they were ready for another try. It was Orville's turn this time. As the plane started, Wilbur ran alongside, holding onto one of the wings to guide it. The machine gathered speed. Up, up it climbed. It traveled 120 feet. It stayed in the air 10 seconds.

December 17, 1903, became a historic date. It was the first time a flying machine, with a man aboard, had lifted itself into the air through its own power.

The plane was christened the "Kitty Hawk" in honor of the lonely beach which had witnessed its solo flight. For the Wright brothers, and for modern aviation, it was only the beginning. But man had learned to fly.

Coming Next Month

The January cover for the News strikes the keynote for the whole issue. Can you guess what it is if you are told that the cover picture is called "Strike Up the Music"?

You are right—"Music" is the keynote. On almost every page, you will find something new and interesting about music.

In the story, "The Maestro's Secret," you will be kept guessing as to what the secret is until the very end!

"Old Rags! Old Iron!" is a story about a junk-man. What has that to do with music? You'll see when you read it!

"The Fine Song for Singing" will tell you about Stephen Foster.



PHOTO BY ROY LEISER

Fireproofing Christmas

WHEN THE Seattle, Washington, Fire Department asked the schools to cooperate for a "safe and sane Christmas," Junior Red Cross boys and girls got together and worked out these colorful—but fire-proof—Christmas tree decorations.

First they drew designs of big shining stars, angels,

deer, jumping jacks, tassels, pine-cones, and many other Christmas ornaments. Then they cut these designs out of metal foil in gay colors of silver, red, and green.

In the picture above, a Junior Red Cross boy at John Hay School shows some of the tree ornaments made by fellow members in art classes at his school.

Make This a Safe Christmas!

Accidents during Christmas month top all others

The excitement and rush of the Christmas celebration are largely responsible for the increased accident rates. To make this a safe Christmas—

WHEN ON THE STREET:



Cross at crosswalks only. Cross on green lights.

Be careful not to dart from behind parked cars into busy streets, or block your vision by piling your arms too high with packages.



Take special care not to push on stairways, escalators, elevators, or in revolving doors.



Beware of icy streets and sidewalks.

WHEN AT HOME:



Place Christmas tree on a firm base, well away from the fireplace or other heating units.



Never use candles on tree. Inspect the light and extension cords.



When hanging decorations use a reliable stepladder.



Guard against falls by making sure that toys and wrappings are not left on the floor or stairs.



When discarded, be sure your Christmas tree is placed on the curb to be collected by the city department.



The Littlest Star

MARIAN KING

Illustrations by Lin Freegard

FAR, FAR UP in the heavens grouped about the King of Stars were all the large Stars, the medium-size Stars, and small Stars.

Hurriedly the King glanced over the brilliant gathering. Anxiously he looked for the largest Star and for his own son, the Prince, the tiniest of all the Stars in his big kingdom. But neither was there.

A hushed silence fell over the group as they, too, felt the absence of their little Prince. He was so little! So very little indeed that he had to be carried on the back of the largest Star, his royal attendant.

"I'll just look quickly again," the King murmured. "He may be hiding. He—" the King's crown tilted, his scepter shook as he stared in astonishment at the sight in front of him.

"Make haste, do hurry, little Prince, or we'll be late," the voice of the largest Star rang out as it floated over the speechless assembly.

"I'm—com-ing," breathlessly the littlest Star steadied himself to turn slowly on his third point.

Spellbound all the Stars gazed in the direction from which the gasping came. Their Prince was walking! Walking as they walked! He was turning on his points as they turned, only ever so much slower! But he was learning! Not only was he so tiny but courageous as well. But above all, he was the most beautifully shaped Star of all. Every point of his was perfect and his twinkle was far more brilliant in his tiny way than their big ones.

"Here I am at last, Father." The littlest Star smiled proudly as he balanced himself to face the kindly and well-pleased King.

"Well done, my Prince, well done," he greeted him enthusiastically.

"Well done, little Prince," echoed the happy

chorus of the other Stars across the heavens.

"Tonight," began the King softly, "there will be great happenings on earth—the greatest of all events!" His voice was almost a whisper.

"Happenings—greatest of all events!" The Stars looked askance at one another. What could their King mean? The greatest of all, why, the earth was full of happenings—every day and night—but the greatest!

"Tonight, tonight," the King repeated—but stopped as quickly as he began. The littlest Star had disappeared right under his very eyes.

"He's gone!" The Stars exchanged anxious glances.

"Search at once," ordered the King. "He is so very little; he is bound to get lost!"

WHILE THE STARS set out in search of the littlest Star, he slept peacefully in a downy fold of a tiny white cloud, so exhausted was he from his first walk.

Slowly he awakened. He rubbed his tiny little eyes. As he rubbed them gently open, a strange feeling came over him. Where was he? He didn't see his faithful friend, the largest Star—then suddenly it all came back to him. He was standing in front of his father when he grew so very sleepy, so tired, he slipped quietly away. The little Cloud nearby looked so comfortable—so quiet and peaceful and soft—he would climb into it and sit there just a moment to rest. And then, he must have fallen asleep.

"I must hurry back," he aroused himself. But he was moving slowly, floating it seemed to him—

"I can't let you down now," said the little Cloud kindly. "We don't stop once we've



started until we finish our full share of drifting."

"Well, if that's the case," said the littlest Star, "I'll just have to stay." "But," he inquired anxiously, "you will take me back to my father, the King of Stars, by night, won't you? He will be looking everywhere for me, you know."

"I am his only child," he continued, "I am very, very little, too, but my father says, no matter the size as long as we shine and give all the light we can—that is giving pleasure and beauty!"

"That's true, very true," replied the little Cloud. "I am little too, but my mother tells me," she went on, "as long as I keep my rhythm and position and drift carefully in my place I will help to keep the beautiful order and formation in the sky. That too, she says, is giving beauty and pleasure!"

"Order and formation in the sky," the littlest Star mused as he balanced himself on his fifth point. "Order—" he spoke aloud. "and formation—catch me—!"

"Yes," the little Cloud looked toward the voice, but the littlest Star was not there.

AS THE LITTLE CLOUD searched eagerly around her, the littlest Star was dropping breathlessly in the sky trying to balance himself. "Why did I have to stand on my fifth point?" he scolded himself as he kept falling. "That is my hardest point to balance. I just have to try and find my way back."

He tried to pull himself up but kept falling further down and down—

"This is the way." Something caught hold of him as he started to leave the sky for the earth. "This is the way," the kindly voice said again.

But all the littlest Star saw was a Circle of Light. Such a beautiful Light he had never seen before in the sky. No, not even from the top of the fifth point of the largest Star.

"This way, littlest Star," the voice dictated and laughed gently. "I just caught you in time. You and I have great things to do to-

night! We have beautiful things to do! This is the greatest of all nights!"

"To do—we—the greatest of all nights!" the littlest Star gulped bewildered.

"Oh, come," the Circle of Light grew closer. "It's going to be the most beautiful adventure—a beautiful one for both of us," she spoke almost in a whisper.

The littlest Star took a deep breath. Carefully he balanced himself and slowly turned on his points.

As he turned the sky grew darker and the Circle of Light clearer. And then he felt a sudden change come over him. Was he—oh was he, the littlest Star in all his father's big kingdom—oh, it couldn't be true? He slowed down for a moment. Yet, it was true—he was getting larger.

"Circle of Light," he shouted almost beside himself. "Circle of Light, look!" he cried again. "I'm growing bigger, ever so much bigger! It is true, isn't it?" He asked to make sure.

"Indeed it is true," the Circle of Light answered quickly.

"I'm growing now! I'm growing!" The littlest Star was jubilant. "I won't ever have to be carried again. My father," he smiled at the idea, "will be well pleased."

"We turn here to the East," the Circle of Light interrupted the littlest Star's happy thoughts as she waited for him.

"This very night," she spoke tenderly, "on the earth in a stable of the Inn in Bethlehem a babe will be born—a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

"The prophets in the ages past," the Circle of Light continued, "had foretold of his coming as 'The Prince of Peace. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his Father David: And of his kingdom there shall be no end!'"

"The Prince of Peace!" the littlest Star murmured.

"Yes, The Prince of Peace," The Circle of Light responded joyously as she went on. "Now listen attentively, littlest Star, because I am going to tell you exactly the message



you are to carry on this beautiful mission."

"The message I will—the mission—" The littlest Star's voice shook with excitement as he waited.

"You, littlest Star," she began, "will shine so brilliantly that those for miles around will notice it and wonder at the sign. Your light will fill them with awe and wonder and a peacefulness they have never felt before. It will make them want to follow over the roads that you will light up."

"There will be shepherds in the fields who will be struck by your beauty and illumination. There will be men, women, and children who will see and feel your light. Every animal, small and large, domestic, tame, and wild, will sense this strange wonder."

"And even after the babe is born there will be Wise Men from the East who have followed your light. They will come with their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to worship and adore him."

"And you, littlest Star, will feel a tender stillness that you have never known before. And such a ray of light you will give that your light will shine eternally in the hearts of all mankind!"

"Shine in the hearts of all mankind!" the littlest Star repeated thoughtfully. "What more could a Star desire?" He twinkled happily.

"And now," the Circle of Light glowed, "I must be on my way. But wait," she turned,

"see there below! The people are gathering. Shine, littlest Star, shine! It's time to fulfill your mission."

THE LITTLEST STAR straightened himself, then started to move. Slowly his light began to spread. As he went toward the East his light became brighter and brighter and he grew so large that the heavens were one golden glow.

And on earth people were assembling. Shepherds huddled around their flocks pointing to the sky. Men, women, and children ceased what they were doing and looked up.

The little animals came from their haunts to sniff the air and turn their soft wet noses upward. The wild beasts grew quiet. Even the birds took to the highest branches. And the whole earth was still with expectancy.

And then the littlest Star saw the earthly people and creatures start to move along the road over which his light was leading them.

Awed by the peace he beheld, he paused. He shone more brilliantly than ever as he looked through an opening in the stable roof. Behold! There was the babe lying in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes!

"The Prince of Peace!" the littlest Star breathed as he burst into a light that not only lighted the sky and the earth, but the hearts of man, woman, child, and beast.

As he glanced again at the sacred scene below he saw the Circle of Light, a halo for the babe. He saw her linger long enough to look up. He heard her whisper tenderly, "Littlest Star, oh, littlest Star of Bethlehem, how beautiful you are!"

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, good will toward men.
For unto us a child is born,
Unto us a son is given:
And the government shall be upon his shoulder:
And his name shall be called wonderful,
Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."





BRIDE DOLL FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA—"She's lovely!" exclaim these girls as they admire her colorful costume and headdress. The doll is the gift of the Czechoslovak Junior Red Cross to the American Junior Red Cross of which the girls are members.

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